



## BUSINESS-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

### CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

#### APPLICATION FORM

*The Governor is seeking applications for the Certified Business-Friendly Community Program. Applications can be made by Communities, Chambers of Commerce, Regional Development Authorities, Trade Organizations, Businesses or individuals but require the approval of the community being considered.*

*A volunteer scoring panel will review and score the applications received. Applications for the 2015 program are due September 18<sup>th</sup> and November 20<sup>th</sup> and may be submitted in electronic format to [bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov](mailto:bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov). All communities that become certified will receive recognition on the State of Maine DECD website and will receive a certificate as well as two "Certified Business-Friendly" signs.*

*Applications for certification will be evaluated and scored based on narrative answers, response to questions and inclusion of information identified on the application checklist. The Review Team reserves the right to seek and/or request and utilize additional information for applications received. Failure to abide by the principles of this program may result in the revocation of a community's certification.*

#### **Applicant Identification**

Signature of Municipal Official:	Name:
Date:	Title:
Signature of Nominator:	Name/Title:
Date:	Name of Business/Chamber of Commerce/Regional Development Authority, etc:

## Review Team Analysis – 100 Points

Members of the Review Team will assign a Review Point Total for each application reviewed. Review Point Totals will consist of the sum of the four scoring areas below and be determined by the total of each. *The application forms received will be evaluated and scored based on narrative answers, response to question and inclusion of information identified on the application checklist. The Review Team reserves the right to seek and/or request and utilize additional information for applications received.* The following criteria will be used:

### **Customer Service/Product/Capacity (20 Points)**

Describe the Community's efforts, resources and capacity to attract new business, retain existing business and assist businesses who want to expand by providing specific details and examples highlighting each of the bullet points outlined below:

- Citizen committee and/or professional staff qualified and dedicated to promoting and assisting business development; pursuing economic development policies, programs and projects.
- Describe the process by which the community (staff, committee, etc.) works to promote economic development activity. Describe who is responsible for what, who takes the lead on projects, etc.
- Describe specific projects or programs that the community undertook or has in place to support existing businesses and attract new businesses.
- Community/Business efforts to retain, expand, and/or recruit new businesses (include number of businesses assisted, number of jobs created, etc.).
- Adopted up-to-date Comprehensive Plan with identified growth areas, pre-permitted sites/identified industrial sites, commercial and industrial zoning established, including amount of land/area dedicated to industrial development, Downtown Development, etc.

Describe Community and the resources and tools being utilized to encourage an "open for business" business-friendly attitude.

- Describe programs utilized within the community (i.e., local/regional revolving loan fund, accessing local, State, Federal Grant programs, etc.) to improve water, sewer, high-speed internet, housing, etc. that support the business climate. Provide details and specific examples of how these programs have impacted your community and assisted businesses. Emphasis on public infrastructure, downtown redevelopment, three-phase power, broadband/wireless access and programs that directly assist existing businesses or would be attractive to a new business

### **Economic Priority (Please rank the top 3 priorities in the community)**

____ Agriculture	____ Marine & Fisheries	____ Commercial
____ Retail	____ Electronics	____ Tourism
____ Forestry	____ Housing/Construction	____ Industrial

\_\_\_\_ Technology      \_\_\_\_ Manufacturing  
\_\_\_\_ Downtown Development

\_\_\_\_ Bio Technology

### **Business/Local involvement/Collaboration (20 Points)**

Describe the efforts, contributions and collaboration that your community has undertaken to encourage business opportunities by providing specific examples and details under each of the bullet points below:

- Skilled work force or the willingness to form partnerships with businesses, community, local schools/colleges within the community and/or region to develop go-to-market strategies, pool labor and talent resources, and train people. Identify businesses and provide details.
- Outline how collaboration within the community with businesses, chambers of commerce, development organizations, etc. have contributed to increasing the “time is money” approach for businesses
- Describe and provide examples of partnerships formed and collaborative efforts that have been utilized in the community resulting in a positive outcome
- Identify quality of life amenities that your community and/or region offer (i.e., educational, cultural, tourism related, etc.)

### **Notice for Public Comments/Application Support Letters (30 points)**

Describe the efforts of the community, citizens and businesses to increase public awareness of this program and contributed to the application by providing specific examples and details including:

- Community and/or business efforts to seek support of citizens to apply for the certification
- Submission of Notice to solicit Public Comment (Notice must have been published no less than 10 days prior to application deadline)
- At least three (3) letters of support from businesses, not including the letter from the nominator, if applicable. At least one of these business support letters should be from a prominent/well-known Maine business located in the community. The letters of support should ideally be from businesses whose location is independent, i.e., the business is not dependent on retail spending, who chose to locate or expand in your community when there were other options and/or who have either recently expanded or located in the community or who have utilized local, state or federal programs. Letters should contain specific examples and details of how the community has supported, demonstrated and impacted their efforts to be successful.

### **Licensing Permitting Mill Rates (30 points)**

Provide the community’s mill rate for the last five years and projected mil rate for next five years. Explain reasons for any noted increases or decreases. Identify efforts and strategies the community has or is implementing to keep property tax rate competitive.

Describe the communities licensing and permitting process and the associated timeline to complete the process.

Utilizing the following chart, please provide the following:

- List areas where the community requires licenses and/or permits
- Cost of license/permit and if it is a one-time fee or reoccurring fee
- What is the purpose/use of the license/permit fees collected (i.e., administrative costs, revolving loan fund, etc.)
- Indicate which of the licenses or permits listed are above what is required at the State level
- Specify the timeframe in which a license/permit decision is made (i.e., 5 working days, 30 days, 90 days, etc.)

Type of License/Permit	Cost of License/Permit	One-time Fee, reoccurring Fee	Purpose of Fee	Above State requirement	Decision Making Timeframe

*Completed Application Forms and supporting documentation should be sent in electronic format to:*

[bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov](mailto:bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov)

Questions contact:

Andrea K. Smith  
Department of Economic & Community Development  
59 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0059  
(207) 624-9813  
[andrea.smith@maine.gov](mailto:andrea.smith@maine.gov)

# APPENDIX

## A-B

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*Certified Business-Friendly*

## **APPENDIX A**

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Packaging Checklist for Complete Application:**

**Application Form with Community Certification**

**Responses to Narrative Questions\***

**Notice to solicit Public Comment (must be published at least 10 days prior to application deadline)**

**3 Letters from Businesses in support of Application**

\*MARGIN and TYPE SIZE. All applications must contain margins consistent with those in the Application and be typed using a minimum size 12 Arial font on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper. Please identify and answer all of the questions listed. The narrative responses to questions must not exceed a total of 6 pages. Faxed copies will not be accepted.

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***Certified Business-Friendly***

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Public Comment Notice**

The City/Town of \_\_\_\_\_

The City/Town of \_\_\_\_\_ is applying to become certified under the State of Maine's Business-Friendly Community Program. Comments may be submitted in writing no later than (date of application deadline) to: Andrea K. Smith, Department of Economic and Community Development, 59 State House Station, Augusta ME 04333-0059 or in electronic format to [bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov](mailto:bizfriendly.decd@maine.gov)

**CONTACT:**

**ANDREA K. SMITH  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
111 SEWALL STREET  
59 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE, 04333-0059  
TELEPHONE (207) 624-9813  
TTY 1-800-437-1220**

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